

## **Short-Term Solutions**

### **Short-Term Solutions Supported by the Steering Committee Policy and Design Solutions**

#### **1. Lower Meter Fines if Paid in Short Period**

Lower the meter fines if the ticketed person pays within 30 minutes to 1 hour of receiving the violation. This will lessen the penalty for the honest patrons who are slightly late getting back to the meter. This policy would be similar to the City of Clayton's parking meter ticketing policy for its downtown office and commercial area.

***The Steering Committee also included the following suggestion:***

*A Board of Alderman action could be taken to allow lower fines for any area within the City if and only if the business district implements a strategy and service area to allow people to pay off their fines within the district boundaries. Through this additional clarification, the City would not have to absorb the additional cost, and the lost revenue would be lessened, since practically speaking, only limited areas would have the capacity to implement such a provision.*

***Resident Comment***

*We think that lowering metering fines is a good idea but we do not know how many people could actually pay the fine within that time period. Something that is indirectly related would be the dropping of meter charges on weekends as is done in many other areas of the city. On the weekend many people get ticketed, as they must assume there is no meter charge on the weekend. This shock may discourage their frequency at which they visit the neighborhood.*

This solution does not increase the actual number of parking spaces available in the area. This solution does address one of the negative aspects related to the heightened competition for parking in the South Grand Business District by lessening the fees for customers who miss getting back to their parking meter in time. The weekend changes are also a good idea to increase the competitive situation for retail businesses in the area. The Business Group should discuss these proposed changes in detail.

#### **2. Distribute the ADA Parallel Parking Spaces**

Disperse the ADA parallel parking spaces on Grand (currently 2 located by the pedestrian crossing in front of Babylon International). The parking solution drawings show the addition of ADA parallel parking spaces along Grand and side streets, balanced with the locations of off-street parking lot ADA spaces.

#### **3. Encourage Stacked Employee Parking**

Encourage employee parking to be stacked parking two or three cars deep. The St. Louis Wok at 3159 South Grand illustrates this example. Here nine cars are often parked on the back of this property configured three cars deep.

***The Steering Committee agreed with this solution with the following conditions:***

*Stacked parking will be only for employees, only behind (commercial?) buildings, using the City's current Board of Adjustment process, and include suggestions or solutions to aesthetic concerns.*

**4. The City Should Follow the Demolition Review Process**

The City should strictly follow its Demolition Review Process including public participation for any demolition involving older buildings in or adjacent to the Grand Business District. When a demolition permit is applied for in the study area, the City should forward a copy to neighborhood organizations (neighborhood groups and business districts). The Demolition Review Process includes specific written requirements for architectural quality, condition of the structure, neighborhood effect, reuse potential and urban design. The aesthetic requirements for building on a site approved for demolition should be strengthened to require historically detailed replacement buildings. Landscape, fencing, and lighting standards should be enforced on all projects. See Update Guidelines Solution #34 and Entry Monument Gates at Solution #35 to define the edge of the Commercial District for additional information.

*The Steering Committee agreed with this solution with no additional comments.*

**5. Encourage Shared Use of First Divine Science Church Parking Lot**

The 27-car parking lot of the First Divine Science Church (3617 Wyoming) is a parking resource that could serve the existing congregation (church services and church group meetings), while also serving adjacent business and residential uses through a contractual agreement, possibly through the CID. This well situated, small parking lot with alley access could serve as a model for future parking lots west of Grand Avenue. The lot is located outside of the Commercial District and could serve not only adjacent residents and institutions, but also during portions of the day and week could serve commercial employees and possibly customers. The solution drawings show landscaping improvements on the parking lot site toward adjacent residences. Income from the residential and commercial customers could pay for installation and maintenance of the pavement and landscaping. Accessibility to this lot could be improved with proper signage and the interconnection of other small parking lots accessed off of the alleys as shown in the drawings. See Creating Parking Lot Synergy at solution #25.

*The Steering Committee made a strong recommendation for the final Parking Study to “approach the First Divine Church of Science to reach an agreement about sharing parking for this lot”.*

**6. Clearly Mark all Pedestrian Crossings**

Clearly mark all pedestrian crossings, including the side street crossings within the Business District. This will enhance pedestrian safety, and could strengthen District character if designed more uniquely than the standard striping patterns. Some municipalities have used pavers (U City Loop), while others have installed colored concrete (Richmond Heights). The pavement changes are expensive solutions. A more unique approach would be to conduct an artist design competition to create street cross walk stencils that could artistically delineate cross walks in a dramatic design or pattern. The paint will need to be the durable type typically used on streets, but the shapes or patterns do not have to be solely stripes or blocks of paint. This solution could actually encourage pedestrian activity throughout the district, making longer walks from a parking space more enjoyable.

*The Steering Committee offered no additional comments.*

The solution drawings show the addition of marked pedestrian cross walks at Juniata and Connecticut, where none currently exist. See more detailed description of this at solution #21.

**7. Limb Up Street Trees to Improve Lighting in District**

Systematically limb up the trees along the public sidewalks, especially around the street light fixtures. This will increase the lighting level projected down to the sidewalk and increase the feeling of security. The commercial storefronts will also be more visible. Only install trees that grow tall, and not low growing, multiple branching trees like the Bradford Pear trees planted along Cherokee Street. The tree limbing policy should be implemented along the side streets too, and reviewed every year. The work should be completed by an experienced arborist or landscape specialist so as to avoid poor quality workmanship. Ideally along Grand, tree limbs would eventually begin branching above the first floor store windows or wall mounted signage, creating a tree canopy to shade the sidewalk and parallel parking lane. See drawing on page 9.1 for more information.

*The Steering Committee offered no additional comments.*

**8. Install Standardized Signage to Public Parking Lots**

The District signage and street lighting should be similar in character to reinforce the area as an identifiable district or destination. Brick pylons have helped to strongly identify the edges of St. Louis University. A clear image of where public parking is located will facilitate ease of use by the public. For the near term, provide public parking signage directing Business District customers to use the large Commerce Bank parking lot. Good signage designating this large parking lot on City Block 1463 would be a good first step to ascertain the public use and acceptance of this existing parking lot as a solution to the parking problems at this end of the district. After implementation, the district should periodically check the extent of use of this lot to see if the spaces provided in the eastern end of the lot closer to Arkansas Street are more often used or left empty.

*The Steering Committee offered no additional comments.*

The implementation of this implies the purchase of the remaining unused land from Commerce Bank for use as a public parking lot. This could also include the construction of a new mixed-use building just south of the new Commerce Bank building, with a private parking lot located behind this new infill building. The parking solution drawings show two variations of this solution. One solution shows a joint City/developer project where some of the parking spaces on the outer edges of the lot are public metered spaces; the parking spaces to the center of the lot are for the businesses on this block. Clearly the liability and ownership details are more complex with the mixture of parking lot operations, and signage would be necessary to identify the separate uses. Creating a new mixed-use retail/office/residential building just south of the new Commerce Bank will increase the use of the parking spaces farthest to the east. See Reasons for Planning for Growth in solution #38, page 35.

**9. Change Hartford and Juniata Streets to Two-Way**

Change Hartford and Juniata east of Grand back to two-way streets as residents suggested at various times during the parking study process. This change would increase opportunities to access the existing large parking lots behind Commerce Bank.

*The Steering Committee offered no additional comments*

***Business Owner Comment***

*Change one-way direction on Hartford and Juniata to two-way – Original change was made in response to nearby resident's complaints about traffic and accidents involving cars arriving at or leaving Commerce Bank*

*and Roosevelt High School. Any change should be dependent upon residents, the ingress-egress pattern at the new Commerce, the overall traffic flow and safety.*

The parking solution drawings show this change. Resident comments at Focus Group meetings were in favor of this change. A simple survey of the residents on these two blocks could document the popularity of this suggestion. This change works with the new Commerce Bank site plan. Simplicity in getting around the district is a key component of making it easy to find a parking place. Implementation of the change from one-way to two-way streets begins with the Traffic and Street Lighting Division of the Street Department conducting a feasibility study and concludes with the passing of an ordinance by the Board of Aldermen.

#### **10. Implement Angled Parking on Arsenal Along Tower Grove Park**

By removing the center turning lane, angle parking may be possible on both sides of the street. Removing the center turn lane will decrease the apparent overly wide lane width of this street, and will thus slow traffic speed on Arsenal. This will enhance pedestrian safety while it increases parking for the Business District and park uses ranging from regular softball leagues to special events.

***The Steering Committee agreed with this solution with the following comments:***

*This got mixed reviews. Some residents of the 3600 block of Arsenal loved it. Others hated it. The main business objection is that currently, the center “no-driving” lane (which is West of the left-turn lane) is used for unloading products at Mokabe’s (or any subsequent business at that location, which has no alley access). With the suggested change, trucks would block eastbound Arsenal traffic until unloading was completed. Vehicles backing into the westbound lane to leave the angled parking will obstruct westbound traffic.*

*Steering Committee would like to see a visual representation of this. Additionally to solve the above problem, they suggested a “no parking zone” right in front of Mokabe’s between the hours of 9 am – 10 pm (where the meters are currently located) to allow for product delivery.*

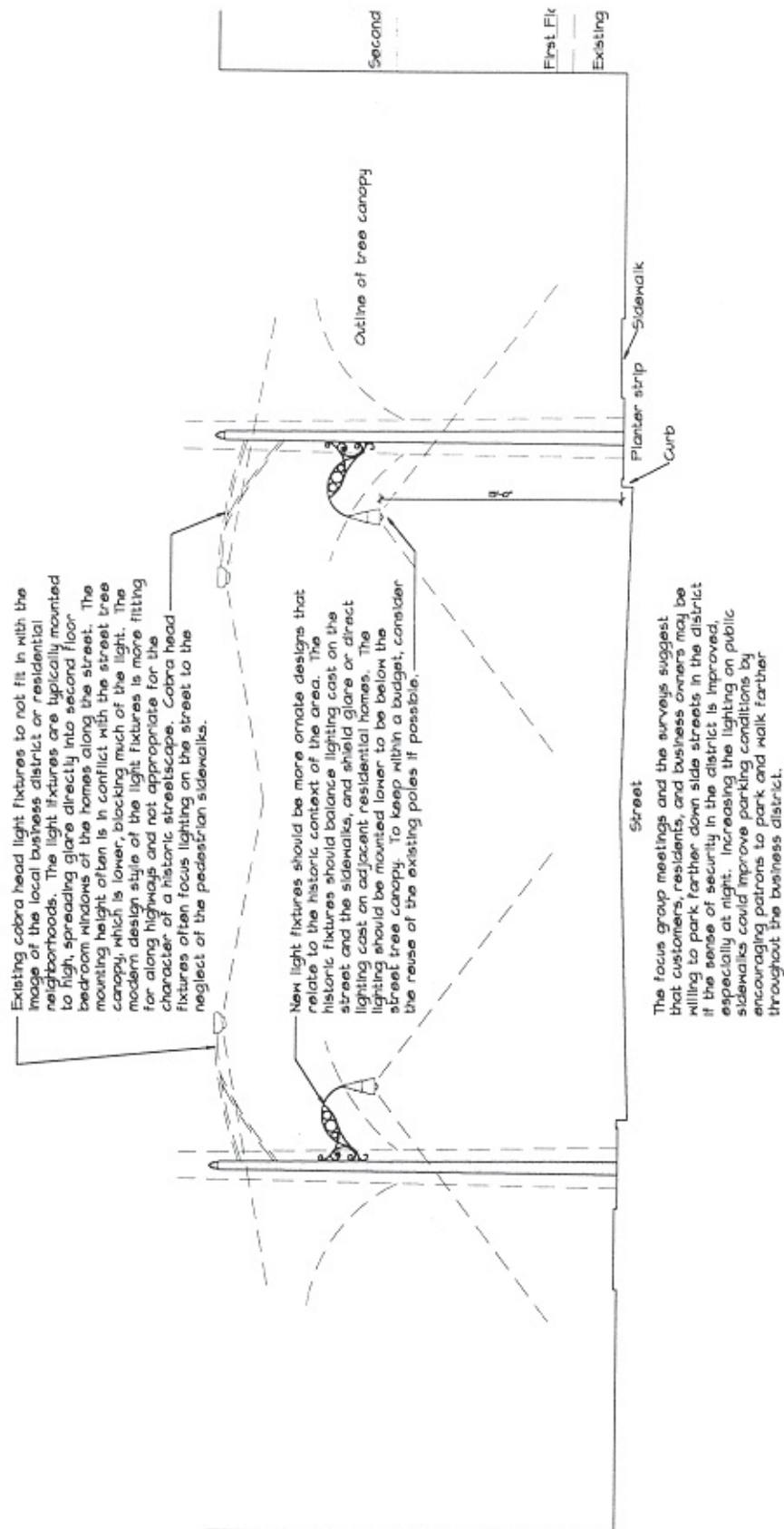
The parking solution drawings show the implementation of this concept along Arsenal fronting Tower Grove Park. The solution shows the angled parking being situated for the right rear wheel of the vehicle located back against the existing curb. Backing in to the spaces will slow traffic as an individual searched this area for a parking space, stopping to block traffic, and then back in to a parking space. When departing, the driver will be facing oncoming traffic and will be able to pull forward out into the direction of travel with no stopping. Similar angled parking is allowed along Skinker across from Forest Park on Sundays. Loading for businesses on the corner of Arsenal should be done in the alley. Trucks can park in this block in such a way that the alley remains open via the connection to Hartford. Implementation of the change from parallel parking to angle parking begins with the Traffic and Street Lighting Division of the Street Department conducting a feasibility study.

***Individual Steering Committee Member Comment***

*According to business owners, the northern portion of the building does not have alley access. Thus, a one-space loading zone should be included on Arsenal Avenue west of Grand Avenue in front of MoKabe’s Coffee House.*

#### **11. Improve City Owned Parking Lots**

District property owned by the City of St. Louis includes a 17-space parking lot at 3147 S. Grand Avenue (needs improved pavement, landscaping and signage) and a presently vacant lot at 3217 S. Grand Avenue



## Solution #22 Street Lighting & Solution #7 Limb Up Street Trees

### South Grand Commercial District Parking Study

including parts of the Tower Grove Heights & Tower Grove East Neighborhoods

City of St. Louis Planning & Urban Design Agency

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The City of St. Louis Planning & Urban Design Agency is a part of the Department of Planning & Urban Development and the City of St. Louis Office of Urban Design. Agency under the provisions of the Plan of the City of St. Louis, Missouri, Chapter 10, Article IV, Section 10.010.

Sheet **9.1**  
Date: March 20, 2003

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No Scale



(potential for an approximately 14-space parking lot with landscaping and signage). The parking solution drawings show improvement of parking layout on both sites. Both sites also have potential for alley access to adjacent parking lots that can form a pattern of interconnected lots in the commercial district west of Grand Avenue. Small, interconnected lots could make access much easier for customers to go from lot to lot without going back on Grand Avenue.

*A Steering Committee made a strong recommendation for the final Parking Study to “improve existing city lots.” Pavement, stripe spaces, install fences, meters, landscape, lighting & signage standards, as required for each parking lot.*

## **12. Encourage Immediate Parking Utilization of Commerce Site**

Upon completion of the Commerce Bank branch at the corner of S. Grand and Hartford in City Block 1463, the remainder of the Commerce Site including the temporary bank location (3146-50 S. Grand) and a large parking lot south and east of the branch will be available for other uses. In the interim, the remainder of the Commerce Site should be available via a contractual agreement or sale as parking for business district uses in the northern portion of the district. The parking solution drawings show improvement of parking layout with landscaping stressed along Juniata and a pedestrian plaza between the bank and retail uses to the south. Maintenance of the parking pavement, attractive signage and perimeter landscaping should be sought. A new retail building for the corner of S. Grand and Juniata is shown on the parking solution drawings, which will help increase the use of this parking lot. See solutions #37 and #38 for additional information. The drawing sequence shown on pages 34.1, 34.2, and 34.3 show one possible scenario of developing this property.

Note that the solution drawings show an approximation of the new Commerce Bank site plan, with some critical modifications. The Business District should begin immediate negotiation meetings with Commerce Bank to make these modifications to the Bank’s proposed site plan while they exist only on paper. The suggested modifications include:

- a) Maintaining a continuous retail building street front for the parcel to the south of the bank instead of extending parking toward the street, just south of the new Commerce Bank (near new fountain).
- b) Positioning Commerce Bank employee parking to the east of their drive-thru teller lanes instead of further to the south of the teller lanes.
- c) Positioning the drive-thru teller lanes as tight as possible to the east façade of the bank building, a 12’ drive aisle and tighter turning radius could minimize the size of the drive-thru structure.
- d) Allow a single lane curb cut (12’ maximum) to exit the drive-thru tellers to minimize the distance for pedestrians to cross intersect autos when accessing the parking lot to the east of the drive-thru.

*The Steering Committee made a strong recommendation for the final Parking Study to “utilize as much as possible of the existing Commerce Site for enhanced parking.”*